A NEW YEAR'S GREETING

The Common Cause

OF HUMANITY.

The Organ of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.

LAW-ABIDING.] ***Societies and Branches in the Union 561.*** [NON-PARTY

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Notes and News.

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[The National Union does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed in signed articles.]

Hohenzollern Peace Proposals Again.

As we go to press, the news comes *viâ* New York of a Berlin request "for an immediate meeting of delegates of the belligerent Powers to discuss peace." This telegram follows in such feverish haste on the vague feelers for peace put out last week that it is impossible not to suspect that there are forces at work within Germany itself, perhaps more dreaded by Hohenzollernism than by the Allies. Up to the very brink of war Hohenzollern rule was execrated by the great majority of Germans. The cry in Bavaria was, "We are being bled white! We cannot endure this strain of taxation much longer." Sometimes it was added in an under tone: "In two years we Social Democrats shall control the Empire." The Hohenzollern *régime* no doubt were aware of the peril (for themselves) when they plunged Germany into war. It is therefore not impossible that the forcing of the pace towards peace is made under pressure of a growing dread; Hohenzollern autocracy is snatching at the opportunity of concluding a peace which shall ensure some measure of security for their continuance. In any case Hohenzollernism has every interest in exasperating hate of England and France, and preventing at all costs any understanding between the Free Democracies of the West and a Germany which for some time past has been moving faster and faster towards Democracy.

"The Whole Nation."

Under the heading of "The Whole Nation at War," *The Daily News* of December 21st takes occasion to say: "The drastic and far-reaching plans of the Government to enrol the whole labour resources of the country—compulsorily if need be—are rapidly taking shape. . . . Women are not included in the scheme, but will be asked to volunteer." "The whole nation," it would seem, does not include women; an oversight on the part of *The Daily News*. It is certainly inconceivable that in a free democracy such as our own, anything but voluntary service should be expected of women; for they alone are excluded from any voice in national affairs, and conscription for women without the franchise would be incredible. But it is significant that the unenfranchised half of the nation should be pronounced to be non-existent by a leading paper, and that women were also overlooked by the Prime Minister.

"It is curious," says a leader-writer in *The Daily Mail* of the same date, "that the Prime Minister did not refer specifically to women in his masterly speech. But it may be assumed that he had women in mind, and that they will not be forgotten in the new organisation. They are actually being enrolled in Germany: and their enrolment in France and Italy is already under consideration. Victory will go to the side which in this gigantic struggle employs all its strength to the best advantage. The organisation of woman's aid in Great Britain has not as yet advanced so far as in France, where most of the work on the farms is being done by them, aided by girls and boys. It is not the case, however, that women are unwilling to give their services in Great Britain. On many occasions in the past two years they have come forward in answer to appeals, only to be told that they were not required."

Helping to Increase the Food Supply.

Women are not always overlooked. And those who are afraid to trust them, are not afraid to ask a great deal of them—and never in vain.

The Board of Agriculture is making a strong appeal to young women of good physique and education to take a short course of training at once in milking, calf-rearing, the management of stock and farm horses, tree cutting and spraying, market gardening and vegetable growing, poultry-keeping, or other branches of farm work. Scholarships of £4 for four weeks are being offered, and other facilities for training. Only a very superficial knowledge can, of course, be gained in a few weeks, but it is better than no training at all, and will at least serve to show whether a woman has any natural capacity for the tasks she is prepared to undertake. There is no time to lose in obtaining such preliminary training as is possible, as workers are urgently needed for the early spring.

One of the greatest difficulties in bringing fresh workers into some districts has been the lack of suitable accommodation, cottages being often over-crowded already. For educated women accommodation might perhaps be found in some of the larger houses; but in some places it may be necessary to erect huts with reasonable facilities not only for cooking but for drying clothes.

Women Voters and the Standard of Wages.

Writing on "Women Workers in Australia," the Sydney correspondent of *The Times*, of December 27th, states that the departure of men from various occupations has not lowered the general standard of wages. "The woman worker is no meek claimant for charity. She knows clearly her value as a worker, and quietly insists on equal pay for equal work. Her outlook is broadening. She is thinking for herself, and is not so ready as of old to concede that only man possesses reason. Her intuition is being sharpened by contact with realities, and is making competitors feel that they will henceforth have to employ all their faculties unless they are to be outstripped. The referendum finds most women for the first time making up their minds for themselves. They do not appeal to fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons for advice. They form their own conclusions. Best of all, they have invaded masculine fields and yet remain feminine."

A Minimum Rate of Pay.

In an article in *The Sunday Times*, Mr. Harold Cox points out that where a war bonus has been granted it has usually been at the demand of the organised trade unions, because they have the power to enforce it. "The result has been that men earning several pounds a week received a 5 per cent. or 10 per

cent. increase, and exactly the same percentage of increase has been given to men earning only £1 a week, or even less, so that the man with £3 a week received three times as much as the man with £1. Yet clearly, if justice alone had been considered, a greater increase ought to have been given to the man with low wages." Still harder is the case of the women, who in some occupations, notably in the Civil Service, receive a lower rate of bonus than the men. Mr. Harold Cox urges that as the Government is at this moment by far the greatest employer of labour, it should at once establish a minimum rate of pay sufficient to cover the cost of simple living. He shows that whereas, according to the report of the Health of Munitions Workers' Committee, sufficient and adequate food cost, at last April's prices, 14s. 10½d. a week, many women are still earning only about 15s. a week on Government orders, and are legally forbidden to leave their employment in search of better paid work.

More Effective Safeguards Needed.

The new Order amending L2 guarantees to women employed on work previously done by men the rate of £1 for a week of forty-eight hours, but does not apparently cover all trades, engineering, shipbuilding, armament and ordnance, for instance, coming under L2, while carpentry and joiners' work do not. In the past Order L2 has not proved a sufficient safeguard for women doing men's work, while the women who do not come under this Order have been still less effectively protected.

Miss Macarthur, of the National Federation of Women Workers, gives instances of very inadequate payment of women on Government work.

"I have just had a letter from the Secretary of an important trade union in the Potteries," she says, "pointing out that there were middle-aged women on Government work getting only 10s. for a forty-eight hour week. Women aged twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty-one, and thirty-six were only getting 9s. a week, with a war bonus of 11d., and out of that they had to pay unemployment insurance. The manufacturers in question had refused to agree to a wage of 12s. a week for every woman of twenty-one. These women cannot leave to better themselves.

"Clerks and typists in controlled establishments are also subject to the leaving certificate clause, and at Caxton Hall Tribunal recently a competent shorthand-typist earning 17s. 6d. a week who could command 35s. to 50s. in the open market was refused a certificate.

Miss Macarthur considers that a minimum of 6d. an hour, or 24s. for a forty-eight hour week, should be paid on all munition work. Since the rate of £1 was fixed, the cost of living has advanced by more than one-third, so that women, she maintains, would be justified in asking for 26s. 8d.

The Case of the Skilled Women.

The promised Order with regard to women employed on skilled work has not yet been issued.

When the Trade Unions agreed to waive their rules, in order to facilitate the necessary dilution of labour, an agreement was made between the employers, the Unions, and the Government that women employed on skilled work should be paid at the rates customarily paid to men for the job. The way in which this agreement has been enacted was illustrated lately by Mrs. Drake, in a lecture given before the Fabian Women's group.

In the shells and fuses agreement, she states, it was laid down that a woman taking the place of a skilled man was to be paid the rate "customarily paid for the job," but nothing was said about the semi-skilled or unskilled man. Consequently, the employers immediately found that the woman was not employed on a skilled man's job, or if so, was not employed on the whole of his job, &c., and they decided that the rate paid was to be that customarily paid to women. Thousands of women poured into the shell and fuse factories, and not one in a thousand received the rates "customarily paid for the job." Again, the Treasury agreement stated "that the admission of female labour shall not affect adversely the rates customarily paid for the job." But the Ministry of Munitions at once declared that these terms included only piece-rate, and not the time-rate, which was, in fact, nothing more than a direct invitation to the employer to evade the plain sense of the agreement.

A Promise and Its Fulfilment.

"The pledge which I gave with respect to women's wages has been kept. If it has not been kept, I ask why the cases in which it was not kept were not brought to my notice. Wherever they were brought to my notice, they were set right. . . . To talk as if women were only getting 20s. per week! Women have never earned so much, and the complaints are coming not from them, but they are complaints manufactured on their behalf."—The first Minister of Munitions.

My telephone bell is not particularly melodious, and it was getting so near to dinner-time that I knew I should be late again. But there is something about a telephone bell that is hard to resist. One never knows what important message it may herald—even at 7.45 p.m., for it is curious how completely office hours have disappeared. All the same, I wasn't pleased to hear it: it might be a Labour Exchange, or a Trade Union, or it might be a Government official, or an employer wanting women workers—but I didn't feel I wanted to deal with any of these things at that time of night. I took off the receiver with a suppressed groan, and this is what I heard.

"Is that the Women's Suffrage Society?"

"Yes," I said.

"I want you to help me, please."

In spite of something very urgent in her voice I hardened my heart, and replied that the office had been shut for some hours.

"Oh, please," she said, "you must help me, for I don't know what to do, and the Suffrage Societies always do help women, don't they?"

I couldn't resist this, so I asked her who she was and what sort of difficulty she had.

"I'm Mrs. X——," she answered, "working at Dash's factory in South London, and I'm doing fitters' work; I've taken the place of a Belgian man who went back to the Army in January. I trained in the workshop at Chelsea, and started work at £1 a week, with a promise of a rise to men's piece-work rates in a month. I've been there ten weeks last Monday; I was tired of waiting for my rise, but I did get on to piece-work rates then. I'm a good worker, and quick, and my earnings this week were £3 4s. 8d., so you can imagine I was glad, because it's not easy living on £1."

While she spoke I remembered her case—a widow with no children, whose "circumstances" had been "reduced" by the war, a woman of about thirty-five, who had taken to metal-turning and fitting as if she had been born a mechanic, as indeed perhaps she was.

"They paid me this evening," she went on—that was why she rang up so late, of course—"and the manager said I was to go back to time rates of £1 a week for the future, because I was earning too much."

"Yes," she agreed, after I had interjected a few rather forcible remarks, "of course it is. But when I asked him why? he said the men in the shop wouldn't stand it, and had protested, and that he wasn't going to lose his skilled men because of one partly skilled woman. He said it was a mistake putting women on piece. He'd not do it with any of the others. £1 a week was what the Ministry of Munitions had said, and if I wasn't satisfied with that I could leave it, for all he cared. And I want you to tell me what I'm to do."

The case seemed so clear and obvious that I thought it would be easily put right. Didn't Circular L2 say that women doing skilled men's jobs should be paid the skilled men's rates? There could be no trouble over that.

"Go back to work," I said, "so as to be there to give evidence. Send me a signed statement of all this, with dates and particulars of the work you do, and of the work the men do, and the rates for both, and I'll go to the proper Government Department on Monday. The Ministry of Munitions say . . ."

In those days I was still optimistic, and I comforted Mrs. X.

* * * * * * *

On Monday morning early I was at the big new Government buildings. It is astonishingly hard to find out who is the proper official for any one piece of business, but, when found, access to him is quite surprisingly easy, and so, after disturbing some ten or twenty young gentlemen, and making my way through a swarm of girl clerks, and climbing six different sets of steep stairs, and going down three lifts, I found myself in Mr. M—— or N——'s sanctum, and sitting on the right chair.

Mr. M—— or N—— is a young lecturer from one of our Universities. His subject may have been ancient or Oriental or

modern languages, and, for all I know, he may have been very brilliant. I don't wish to disparage his attainments; but I soon became aware that I knew a good deal more about engineering and economics and wages than he did, though I don't set out to be an expert myself. We exchanged a number of preliminary remarks, and I told him my business. He wrote it down assiduously in a handwriting of astonishing neatness.

"Of course," he said, "we'll investigate this case, and, if it's as you say, we must naturally make some rearrangement."

He seemed a little reluctant, and "some rearrangement" wasn't as explicit as I could have wished, and a momentary suspicion came over me. But I drove it away. Hadn't the Ministry of Munitions said . . . ?

All the same, I drew Mr. M—— or N—— back into general conversation, just to see whether there was anything I could discover. In a few minutes he was telling me his views of women in industry.

"Dilution and all that," he began, "very necessary, no doubt, but engineering's not suitable work for women."

His tone was infinitely patronising, so I said a few things as gently as I could.

"Oh yes, of course, of course," he answered, "very clever with their fingers, no doubt. But it's not women's work, you know, their place is the home."

I didn't take up that challenge. After a few years of Suffrage work there are some things one has said too often to be able to say again, and no doubt Mr. M—— or N—— thought (for a moment) that he had converted me.

"And then these wages," he went on, "what do women want with such preposterous wages? £3 and £5 a week they get sometimes: it's perfectly out of the question."

I was frankly amazed, and I think my face showed it. He got a little pink in the cheeks, and repeated his point.

"Preposterous, perfectly preposterous; 36s. a week is as much as *any* woman ought to be able to earn, and quite enough, too."

I *tried* to keep quiet, and "behave like a lady," and I only asked him whether it was true that he was one of the men responsible for carrying out the Munitions Act, but it seemed to make him very angry. His pink cheeks became red, and he explained to me, in rather a bored voice, but with great emphasis, that the statements about equal pay for equal work were only meant as a safeguard to the men's rates, and not in any way intended to raise women's rates of pay, and that, of course, in cases where their work didn't compete with men's, other rates were needed.

I expect my face was as red as his; but I was still trying to behave well, so I asked him if he thought it was quite fair that employers should take advantage of the disorganisation and helplessness and patriotism of the new women workers to make undue profits out of them.

"They don't make undue profits," he said, and he was as angry as I was, "and let me tell you this. Since the passing of the War Profits tax it's the State that gets any profits there are, and it's in the direct interest of the Government that employers should get labour as cheaply as possible."

I rose to my feet at that, and what I said I can't now remember. It was a good deal too emphatic to be ladylike, and Mr. M—— or N—— didn't enjoy it. I nearly fell down the lifts and staircases on my way out, because I was in a great rage, and one doesn't see very clearly at such time.

* * * * * * *

As was to be expected, Mr. M—— or N——'s "investigations" led him to the conclusion that £1 a week was the right rate for Mrs. X—— and the other women fitters at Dash's. I don't think Messrs. Dash were surprised when all their women left them: they did not refuse leaving certificates, and we at once got the women other fitters' work elsewhere at the men's piece-work rates. Mrs. X—— is now earning her £3 odd, and Messrs. Dash are turning out thoroughly bad work with their £1 fitters. But Mr. M—— or N—— still sits in his office chair, drawing, I suppose, £700 a year.

The Ministry of Munitions still say . . . , but I've learnt a great deal since they began to say it, and one of the things is that, no matter what Government Departments say,

Women have got to have the Power to Protect Themselves.

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And my telephone bell goes on ringing, at all hours of the night and day.

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A New Year's Greeting.

I have been asked to send a New Year's message to the readers of THE COMMON CAUSE, and I gladly do so. It is a message of Hope: Hope first of all for our dear country. Instinctively we turn to our Poets for guidance here. We think of Henley's "England, My England," and Scott's "Caledonia, Stern and Wild," and Dante's

> "Hope is the mark of all the souls
> Whom God hath made His friends."

but, above all, we think of Wordsworth, for he lived through a crisis very similar to that in which we now find ourselves, and from first to last, often through very dark days, he preached the gospel of Hope. To quote his own words, he

> "Did not shrink from hope
> In the worst moment of those evil days:
> From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays
> For its own honour, on man's suffering heart."

Very seldom have our poets spoken of hope as a duty; but Wordsworth used the word very deliberately, and even emphasised it by italics. Again, and in another sense, in the noble sonnet beginning,

> "England, the time has come when thou should'st wean
> Thy heart from its emasculating food"

he ends on the note of hope; with all his country's faults and shortcomings, he sees that—

> "Earth's best hopes rest all with Thee!"

We must remember that he had lived through worse times than we have ever known. Within the twelve months from October, 1805, to December, 1806, the country lost by death its three greatest leaders—Nelson, Pitt, and Fox. Within the same twelve months her three most important allies on the Continent of Europe had been struck down; but Wordsworth's lamp of hope and confidence burnt on steadily and undimmed. He wrote in 1808, "I began with hope, and hope has inwardly accompanied me to the end."*

Our next subject of hope is for the growing strength of our great cause, the political freedom of women. There is no antithesis between these two hopes. We desire the freedom of women in order the more effectually to serve our country. In not using to their full capacity the mental, moral, and physical capacities of women, nearly all the countries in the world are at present wasting a great national asset. This has begun to dawn upon the man in the street since the beginning of the war, since military necessity has caused the downfall of many of the barriers which excluded women from industrial and professional work for which they were well suited. And to this we must attribute the conversion of many former Anti-suffragists and the newly awakened enthusiasm of the "Suffragists who have never done anything for Suffrage." Women do not want the vote as some women may "want" diamond ear-rings, or motor-cars: they want it in order to be able to give better service for helping to raise the industrial status of women, to create a finer relationship between men and women, to prevent sweating, to undermine the foundations of vice, and (to go back to our poets again) "to build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land."

And so my New-Year's Greeting to you is to commend to you these two great Hopes. Hope for our country and Hope for the building up of the freedom and valour of womanhood.

MILLICENT GARRETT FAWCETT.

* See *Patriotic Poetry of William Wordsworth*, with Introduction and Notes by the Right Hon. Arthur Acland.

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Army Regulations.

On a form set against the wall in the lofty corridor of some large offices sat a poorly dressed woman, patiently waiting.

Opposite to her were some of the tallest windows she had ever seen, and through them, over the slate roofs of a big Insurance Building, the pale rays of the afternoon sun slid wanly, making a shifting pattern of amber light on the floor of the corridor, that gave a false impression of warmth.

From time to time doors would open and close, and a bright girl clerk or spectacled youth would pass the woman without looking at her.

But for all their indifference, she would shrink closer to the wall in a deprecating way that was very painful to see.

It is a common thing in the women of the very poorest classes this air of abject humility; it is the result of life-long servitude and subjection, of lack of vitality, and the utter absence of hope. Bullied in turn by husband, landlord, employer; struggling with no possible chance of success against perpetual poverty and ill-health, unable to cope with the task of bringing up the children, and in regard to the daily burden of domestic drudgery weakly ineffectual, because entirely wanting in utensils, stores, accommodation, and training, the pride of life and self-respect and independence of the free and unoppressed spirit withers and dies.

It is a cruel and piteous thing to see.

At last the door that was nearest to the form against the wall was opened, and a second woman came out into the corridor. For a moment she stood still, as if uncertain, then she came slowly, dizzily, towards the other, who rose to meet her.

"Oh, Mrs. Smith!" she said with a kind of sob, "Oh, my Gawd!"

"'Ush, then now, me dear!" urged the woman who had been waiting. "Come out o' this 'ere, and then yer can tell me what 'e said."

They went down three flights of stone stairs; there was a lift, but they would not have dreamed of presuming to use it. Out in the street both women drew a sigh of relief, and Mrs. Smith turned eagerly to her companion.

The second woman was still young, though her face was lined and drawn with pain, and had that bluish tinge of colour with the bruised look under the eyes that comes of long and severe illness.

"Tell us what 'e said, Serrann, me dear," asked Mrs. Smith eagerly.

Sarah Ann Collins clutched at the other's coat with nerveless hand as she walked along beside her, and her words came fast and brokenly, with hard dry sobs between.

"I told 'im," she gasped, "as how we never had no quarrel, but bein' as I was so bad with me second, and never got right after, 'e got sick of a wife as was always pinin', and never no good to 'im, as you might say, and so 'e left me with the two childer, and went and lived along of Em' Potter. But I told 'im as 'ow I 'ad me marriage lines, and me and mother did for the childer, and I never looked at no other man. And I had paid fer me sewin'-machine, and all, and never went on the Parish, not but what I'd had ter pledge things a time or two, but still I'd kep' the 'ome agoin', and the childer—that's his childer—respeccable. And then 'e says—well, 'e says——"

"'Ere, don't 'ee cry like that, me dear!" interrupted Mrs. Smith "Come down this 'ere road where it's quiet like, and just take yer time a-tellin' of it all."

Mrs. Collins wept silently for a few minutes, and then went on with her tale in flat, hopeless tones

"'E says to me then, 'e says, 'That don't make no matter,' 'e says, you bein' faithful, and all that; what matters, says 'e, is that this 'ere other woman as 'e 'as lived with fer a year and more, is 'is Dependent, 'e says, and marriage lines don't count, nor your 'elth don't, nor what you done fer the children, and keepin' on the 'ome. Wives as is married don't count, 'e says; its Dependents 'as gets the 'lowance, and you ain't got no claim whatever, 'e says. But, of course, says 'e, you can appeal, which I don't suppose will make no difference, for that's the regulations, 'e says. So that there Em' Potter 'ull 'ave everythink, and me and the childer 'aven't no claim," she reiterated, with dull wonder.

"But if 'e is killed, p'r'aps you will get the pension," suggested Mrs. Smith, with that curious fatalistic facing of probable facts common among her class, which is not callous but merely sternly practical.

Mrs. Collins shook her head despairingly.

"I don't suppose as I shall," she answered. "Why should I 'ave it, me bein' only the wife, while 'er is the Dependent? 'Tain't likely!" she added, with unconscious irony.

"Well, you won't be no worse off than you was before," soothed Mrs. Smith, as the two women turned into the dull grey alley where they lived.

"No," assented the little woman wearily; "but the doctor at the Dispensary said as if I didn't 'ave a rest and good food I should go in a decline; it was athinkin' of that there rest and food as made me try and get the 'lowance."

At that moment a grey-headed woman put her head out of the door they had just reached.

"That you, Serrann?" she cried shrilly. "I sent our Ivy up the street fer six-pennorth of fish and chips fer dinner, and ef she ain't gone and lost the sixpence!"

Mrs. Collins turned hopelessly into the house, with a little pale smile at Mrs. Smith, who crossed the narrow road to her own threshold. The smile was Mrs. Collin's only acknowledgment for the hours the other woman had given to accompanying her on her fruitless errand. They understood each other perfectly in the street, and no further thanks were needed; Mrs. Smith knew that when she wanted a "fren' to go with," or, indeed, any other service of any kind, that "Serrann Collins" would in the same matter-of-course way be ready to assist her.

Not all the bitterness of life in the slums, not even the iron cruelty of mysterious Regulations, can crush out the persistent sweetness of the never-failing kindness of the poor to one another.

CAROL RING.

N.U.W.S.S. Scottish Women's Hospitals.

"Trinity Heroes" Bed, Royaumont.

The present occupant of the "Trinity Heroes" Bed is Pierre Jules Corniot, a fair, blue-eyed boy of twenty. He was wounded at Maricourt on July 5th, and had the whole of his left foot shot off—what remained of it was attached to the leg by a shred only. He suffered terribly, as he was obliged to travel by ambulance for twenty miles before it was properly attended to. During this awful journey all the past events of the last weeks of the campaign came before him with startling vividness: he felt the blazing sun on his face, and heard the noise of the guns and the cries of his companions; then for a time it would all fade away, and he seemed to be overcome by darkness and pain. Since coming to Royaumont he has had to have his leg amputated, but, as he says, he is pleased to be rid of it. Pierre is a compositor by trade, so, luckily, this will not interfere with his career afterwards.

He lives at Troyes with his employer. His father died several years ago, and his mother married again; but Pierre did not get on with his stepfather, so he became independent sooner than he otherwise might have done.

There is often a sympathetic little group of "camarades" round the bed by the cloister door. Pierre gets plenty of attention, and delights in it all. He has such a sweet, boyish face, and is so grateful for all that is done for him that I feel sure the donors of the "Trinity Heroes" Bed would think him a most worthy occupant.

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PETER ROBINSON'S Winter Sale

Commences on Monday January 1st

OUR great Annual Sales are now so widely known that there is no need for us to elaborate on the unrivalled opportunities for money-saving they always afford; suffice it to say that this year the Values will fully equal those offered on any previous occasion, although prices have been steadily rising all the year. We safeguarded the Bargains for this Sale by placing our orders many months ago, thus securing goods of our well-known standard quality and style at prices that enable us to offer the same liberal reductions as hitherto

A SALE CATALOGUE

illustrating and describing examples of the thousands of bargains available in all departments sent gratis and post free on request

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LONDON UNITS OF THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITALS (N.U.W.S.S).

Dr. Inglis's last report was written from Braila on November 27th.

That first evening of arrival the Unit went straight into the Hospital of wounded Roumanians and helped with dressings, and the next morning they were asked to take over a hospital to work in conjunction with Roumanian women. Dr. Inglis writes: "The work here has been well worth while . . . all have worked splendidly . . . The Roumanians gave us rations, and took much trouble over the arrangements. Now whole hospitals with their staffs and equipment are being brought in from the Western provinces . . . and the Roumanians can deal with the situation themselves."

Dr. Inglis, therefore, went to the Serbian Headquarters, and discussed a request she received from the Russian Red Cross, and decided that the Field Hospital should continue to work 100 beds for the 1st Serbian Division while it was resting, and the larger part of the London Unit should work for the Russian Red Cross at Issakcha, and the Transport Column should join a Russian Division at Bab-a-dak until required.

The Russians have provided quarters and allowances, and Russian Sisters to do the accounts for the Unit and Transport. Dr. Inglis writes: "We have made friends with many Roumanian women, both in our own hospitals and others. One of them said what they loved about us was our "simplicity." We wondered what simplicity could mean, and Dr. Corbett suggested it must be our boots! There is no doubt our boots have made a great impression. We hear of them on all sides. The other thing is our cheerfulness. One of the Russian Sisters who are to come with us said, to-day, she was so glad to come, for she had heard we were so "joyous." I hope we shall be able to make her "joyous" too.

Funds are urgently needed to maintain the Unit. Contributions should be sent to the Hon. Treasurers, the Lady Cowdray and the Hon. Mrs. Spencer Graves, 66, Victoria Street; and equipment to the Equipment Secretary, 66, Victoria Street, S.W.

"The Common Cause" Hut Fund (Y.W.C.A.).

We want to appeal to all women who cannot leave home themselves to go and "do their bit," to spare something to help the women workers.

All over Great Britain factories have sprung up, where munitions are being made day and night. Sometimes the factories have risen on waste land and in out-of-the-way places where there never have been dwellings for workers; sometimes they are placed in densely populated neighbourhoods where the housing problem is already acute, and the workers cannot have the luxury of a room to themselves to rest in. The long night's work is even more tiring than the day shift, and the women have nowhere to rest. The Young Women's Christian Association is asking for Rest Huts, which are badly wanted all over the country. The map of Great Britain is dotted over with "sites for huts," and as fast as they can be provided they are built and furnished.

The Hut will Cost £500,

and when erected, will bear the inscription,

"Presented by Readers of 'The Common Cause.'"

Nearly £330 has been already subscribed; we want to raise the remaining £170 still needed, so as to make the Hut

A New Year's Gift to the Women Workers.

Our warmest thanks to the subscribers who have responded so generously to last week's appeal:—

	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged ...	273	13	0
Mrs. R. D. Pullar ...	1	0	0
Mrs. Russell Reid ...	1	1	0
Mrs. Shaw	2	2	0
Mrs. Batchelor		2	6
Miss Sloane, M.A.		10	0
Miss Florence Sharp ...	1	0	0
Mrs. Holland	5	0	0
"A. L. B."	3	0	0
Mrs. A. M. Lawrence ...		5	0
Miss Fanny Graham ...		5	0
Miss M. Edgar		10	6
Miss Catharine Christie ...		10	0
Mrs. Boothroyd	1	0	0
The Miss Hooton		5	0
An Edinburgh Suffragist ...		2	6
Mrs. Hermida	1	1	0
Mrs. Warden Briggs ...	1	0	0
Some Members of the Campden W.S.S., per Miss Cameron ...		17	0
Miss Edith A. Taylor ...	10	0	0
Mrs. Best	1	0	0
Mrs. Stout	2	0	0
Mrs. Mitchell	2	0	0
Mrs. Rowland	1	0	0
A Wadehurst Member		2	6
Miss H. F. Brownjohn		10	0
Miss E. Jacobs		2	6
Mrs. M. A. Picton		10	6
Miss G. A. Comben		2	6
Mrs. C. Flügel	5	0	0
Mrs. Broadhurst	1	0	0
Miss B. A. Tonkin	1	0	0
Mrs. Sugden	1	0	0
Mrs. Bishop	1	1	0
Mrs. E. A. Amoor		5	0
Mrs. Anstruther	5	0	0
Plymouth and District W.S.S. proceeds of Cake and Sweet Sale organised by Mrs. Lake)	2	12	0
	£327	10	6

In addition to the above, the Manchester W.S.S. collection for the Hut now amounts to £40 os. 6d.

What Some of our Societies are Doing.

A WAR PARCELS DEPOT.

A very interesting and highly successful bit of war work is being carried on by the Cardiff Society, namely, a War Parcels Depôt, for forwarding the parcels sent by relatives and friends to soldiers on service abroad.

When the idea was mooted, considerable difficulty was met with through the refusal of the Great Western Railway Company to recognise the Suffrage Society as a forwarding agency. This was overcome by the co-operation of the Lady Mayoress and the Women's Advisory Committee over which she presides, which is now finally responsible, but commits the management of the Depôt to the Suffrage Society (every parcel has a label affixed, "Packed by the Cardiff and District Women's Suffrage Society. With good wishes"). The railway company thereupon agreed to forward bales by passenger train free of charge to the port, where the military authority takes charge. A vacant shop has been secured at a nominal rent, and the Gas Company kindly put in all necessary fittings and lent a gas-fire grate, and also tables and trestles, free of charge.

Many of the details of the arrangements have been suggested by an association at St. Helen's, which was already at work when, in February 29th, the depôt was opened under the able and enthusiastic management of Mrs. Soulsby, with an energetic band of helpers. In the first nine months about 10,200 parcels were despatched. The depôt is open four afternoons a week. Parcels are received for any battalion which has been to any considerable extent recruited locally. A charge of 3d. for parcels up to 7 lbs. is made, which covers the cost of packing—large quantities of hessian and twine are used, and, of course, cost has risen—printing, gas, and other incidental expenses. Confidence is assured when it is found that parcels despatched through the depôt arrive with more promptitude and regularity than when despatched through the Post Office, and, in the rare cases where a parcel does not reach its destination, a very thorough system of record makes it possible to discover where it has gone wrong; for in every bale is included a double post-card, on one half of which the Commanding Officer is asked to acknowledge receipt by means of the other half, and as the books show in what bale each parcel has been packed, enquirers can be informed whether the bale has reached the battalion intact, or whether, as has happened in a few cases, something has been abstracted on the way.

The regular workers have become so expert that it is possible to deal expeditiously with the very large number of parcels now handed in every afternoon, and the pleasantest relations have been established between the workers and their regular customers.

WORTHING.—A meeting was held at 8, Liverpool Terrace on Friday, December 15th, at 5 o'clock. Tea was served at 4.30.

Mrs. Thompson took the chair, and introduced herself as the new President of the Society, and Miss Stedman as the new Secretary. A very interesting address was given by Mrs. Renton on the present political situation. She spoke of the work the Suffrage societies had been doing since the outbreak of the war, and the great importance of child welfare work. There were a few questions at the close of her address, and Mrs. Thompson then spoke of the need in Worthing of visitors to children between the ages of one and five. The following resolution was proposed by Mrs. Parker and seconded by Miss Collyer, and unanimously carried:—

"That this meeting considers it urgently necessary in the interest of the whole country that women should be represented in the Parliament which will decide questions of industrial reconstruction arising out of the war, and therefore urges upon the Government the grave necessity of securing the enfranchisement of women in whatever measure of Franchise Reform is presented to Parliament.

LEWISHAM.—Since the commencement of the war we have held a weekly social meeting for the wives and mothers of sailors and soldiers at the Mission Hall, Hither Green. Of necessity many of the members are always accompanied by their little ones, so on Wednesday (20th) Father Christmas with a pack full of toys for the babies, and "pretties" for the mothers appeared and received a delighted welcome. The new Hon. Sec. of the Branch, Miss M. Ethel Denny, was present, and any information concerning this special work will be gladly given by the Hon. Sec., Miss Lemor, 35, Clarendon Road, Lewisham.

Eastern Counties.

MARCH.—A drawing-room meeting was held at St. Wendreda's Rectory, on December 2nd, when Mr. Heitland, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, gave an interesting address dealing with the war-work done by Suffrage organisations, and urging that the service of women should be a qualification for representation. An animated discussion followed, and the following resolution was passed, and sent to the Hon. Neil Primrose, M.P. for the division:—

"That this meeting of the March Women's Suffrage Society awaits with keen interest the proposals of the Electoral Reform Conference, and earnestly hopes that whenever the present electoral qualifications are altered the appeal of women to be placed upon the Parliamentary register, and thus enabled to render fuller and more responsible service to the country, will be fairly considered."

BARNES, MORTLAKE, AND E. SHEEN W.S.S.—A most successful meeting was held at the Mortlake Day Nursery (117, High-street, Mortlake) on December 9th. Miss Attwell, in the chair, opened with a few introductory remarks on the Day Nursery, a new venture, and asked the people present to give this work support. Mrs. Renton followed, and in a very interesting spech outlined the present position of Women's Suffrage, concluding by a spirited appeal for the London Unit of the Scottish Hospitals. Members and friends then partook of tea, followed by an entertainment, consisting of music, songs, and recitations.

Items of Interest.

"Every woman who helps in agriculture during the war is as truly serving her country as the man who is fighting in the trenches or on the sea," is the motto on the certificates issued by the Board of Agriculture and the Board of Trade to women who have completed thirty days' service on the land.

At a fire in Shadwell last week a whole roomful of girls were saved through the courage and coolness of the forewoman in charge of the top floor, who marshalled the girls under her, and led them quietly and safely down a winding staircase at the back.

A committee has been formed under the presidency of Madame Emile Boutroux for the voluntary enrolment of Frenchwomen in the service of their country.

A protest has been made by the Tramwaymen's Union because West Ham Corporation has excluded tramwaywomen from the war bonus scheme

Forthcoming Events.

LONDON UNITS SCOTTISH WOMEN'S HOSPITALS.

JANUARY 4.
Bournemouth—Meeting at Durley Dean Hydro—Speaker: Miss Beatrice Hunter 8.30

JANUARY 5.
Bournemouth—Meeting at Hawthorns Hotel—Speaker: Miss Beatrice Hunter 8.30

JANUARY 6.
Bournemouth—Meeting at Tollard Royal—Speaker: Miss Beatrice Hunter 8.30

JANUARY 7.
Bournemouth—Meeting at Osborne Hotel—Speaker: Miss Beatrice Hunter 8.30

JANUARY 8.
Bournemouth—Meeting at Hydro Westcliff—Speaker: Miss Beatrice Hunter 8.30

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Nurses' Collars, 5½d, 6½d, 7½d. **Cuffs**, 6½d, 8½d.
Nurses' Strings, 2½ inches wide, 8½d, 10½d, 1/- pair.
Nurses' Sister Dora Caps, 8½d, 10½d, 1/- each.
Household and **Fancy** Linens in great variety.
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FURNITURE and all Woodwork can be dusted and polished at the same time by the Ayah Wonder Mitten Duster. Protects the hands and reaches every nook and corner. Antiseptic, absorbing, polishing. Price 2/4, post free.—The Pioneer Manufacturing Co., 21, Paternoster-sq., W.C.

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